

WHY TROOPS WERE SENT TO THE MEXICAN BORDER

President Taft Reviews in Detail the Circumstances Leading Up to the Mobilization of the United States Soldiers

Believes They Served as Check on Invasion of American Rights—Our Foreign Relations Discussed in Message to Congress—Has Hopes Russia Will Remove Cause of Complaint of Treaty Violation—New Treaty With Japan—Troubles With Great Britain Settled.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The relations of the United States with other countries have continued during the past twelve months upon a basis of the usual good will and friendly intercourse.

Arbitration.

The year just passed marks an important general movement on the part of the powers for broader arbitration. In the recognition of the manifold benefits to mankind in the extension of the policy of the settlement of international disputes by arbitration rather than by war and in response to a widespread demand for an advance in that direction on the part of the people of the United States and of Great Britain and of France, new arbitration treaties were negotiated last spring with Great Britain and France. The terms of which were designed, as expressed in the preamble of these treaties, to extend the scope and obligations of the policy of arbitration adopted in our present treaties with those governments. To pave the way for this treaty with the United States, Great Britain negotiated an important modification in its alliance with Japan, and the French government also expedited the negotiations with signal good will. The new treaties have been submitted to the senate and are awaiting its advice and consent to their ratification. All the essentials of these important treaties have long been known, and it is my earnest hope that they will receive prompt and favorable action.

Claim of Alsop & Co. Settled.

I am glad to report that on July 5 last the American claim of Alsop & Co. against the government of Chile was finally disposed of by the decision of his Britannic majesty George V., to whom, as amiable compositus, the matter had been referred for determination. His majesty made an award of nearly \$1,000,000 to the claimants, which was promptly paid by Chile.

Arbitration—Panama and Costa Rica.

In further illustration of the practical and beneficent application of the principle of arbitration and the underlying broad spirit of conciliation, I am happy to advert to the part of the United States in facilitating amicable settlement of disputes which menaced the peace between Panama and Costa Rica and between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Mexico.

On the 6th of March last, in the absence of the secretary of state, I had a personal interview with Mr. Wilson, the ambassador of the United States to Mexico, in which he reported to me that the conditions in Mexico were much more critical than the press dispatches disclosed; that President Diaz was on a volcano of popular uprising; that the small outbreaks which had occurred were only symptomatic of the whole condition; that a very large part of the people were in sympathy with the insurrection; that a general explosion was probable at any time, in which case he feared that the 40,000 or more American residents in Mexico might be killed and that the very large American investments might be injured or destroyed.

After a conference with the secretary of war and the secretary of the navy I thought it wise to assemble an army division of full strength at San Antonio, Tex., a brigade of three regiments at Galveston, a brigade of infantry in the Los Angeles district of southern California, together with a squadron of battle ships and cruisers and transports at Galveston and a small squadron of ships at San Diego. At the same time, through our representative at the City of Mexico, I expressed to President Diaz the hope that no apprehensions might result from unfounded conjectures as to these military maneuvers and assured him that they had no significance which should cause concern to his government.

The mobilization was effected with great promptness, and on the 15th of March, through the secretary of war and the secretary of the navy, in a letter addressed to the chief of staff I issued the following instructions:

"It seems my duty as commander in chief to place troops in sufficient number where if congress shall direct that they enter Mexico to save American lives and property an effective movement may be promptly made."

"The assumption by the press that I contemplate intervention on Mexican soil to protect American lives or property is, of course, gratuitous, because I seriously doubt whether I have such authority under any circumstances, and if I had I would not exercise it without express congressional approval."

"In the first place, I want to make the mobilization a first class training for the army, and I wish you would give your time and that of the War college to advising and carrying out maneuvers of a useful character and plan to continue to do this during the next three months. By that time we may expect that either Ambassador Wilson's fears will have been realized and chaos and its consequences have ensued or that the present government

of Mexico will have so readjusted matters as to secure tranquillity, a result devoutly to be wished. The troops can then be returned to their posts. I understood from you in Washington that General Alshire said that you could probably meet all the additional expense of this whole movement out of the present appropriations if the troops continue in Texas for three months. I sincerely hope that is so. I have from the newspapers that you have no blank cartridges, but I presume that this is an error or that it will be easy to procure those for use as soon as your maneuvers begin.

"Second.—Texas is a state ordinarily peaceful, but you cannot put 20,000 troops into it without running some risk of a collision between the people of the state and especially the Mexicans who live in Texas near the border and who sympathize with the insurrection and the federal soldiers. For that reason I beg you to be as careful as you can to prevent friction of any kind.

"Third.—One of the great troubles in the concentration of troops is the danger of disease, and I suppose that you have adopted the most modern methods of preventing epidemics. That is so much a part of a campaign that it hardly seems necessary for me to call attention to it.

"Finally, I wish you to examine the question of the patrol of the border and put as many troops on that work as is practicable and more than are now engaged in it in order to prevent the use of our headquarters for the carrying on of the insurrection. I have given assurances to the Mexican ambassador on this point."

I am more than happy to have record the fact that all apprehensions as to the effect of the presence of so large a military force in Texas proved groundless. No disturbances occurred. The conduct of the troops was exemplary, and the public reception and treatment of them was all that could be desired, and this notwithstanding the presence of a large number of Mexican refugees in the border territory.

From time to time communications were received from Ambassador Wilson, who had returned to Mexico, confirming the view that the massing of American troops in the neighborhood had had good effect. By dispatch of April 3, 1911, the ambassador said:

"The continuing gravity of the situation here and the chaos that would ensue should the constitutional authorities be eventually overthrown, thus greatly increasing the danger to which American lives and property are already subject, confirm the wisdom of the president in taking those military precautions which, making every allowance for the dignity and the sovereignty of a friendly state, are due to our nationals abroad.

"Charged as I am with the responsibility of safeguarding these lives and property, I am bound to say to the department that our military dispositions on the frontier have produced an effective impression on the Mexican mind and may at any moment prove to be the only guarantee for the safety of our nationals and their property. If it should eventuate that conditions here require more active measures by the president and congress sporadic attacks might be made upon the lives and property of our nationals, but the ultimate result would be order and adequate protection."

The insurrection continued and resulted in engagements between the regular Mexican troops and insurgents, and this along the border, so that in several instances bullets from the contending forces struck American citizens engaged in their lawful occupations on American soil.

Proper protests were made against these invasions of American rights to the Mexican authorities. On April 17, 1911, I received the following telegram from the governor of Arizona:

"As a result of today's fighting across the international line, but within gunshot range of the heart of Douglas, five Americans wounded on this side of the line. . . . It is impossible to safeguard the people of Douglas unless the town be vacated. Can anything be done to relieve situation, now acute?"

After a conference with the secretary of state the following telegram was sent to Governor Sloan on April 18, 1911, and made public:

"Your dispatch received. Have made urgent demand upon Mexican government to issue instructions to prevent firing across border by Mexican federal troops and an awaiting reply. Meanwhile I have sent direct warning to the Mexican and insurgent forces near Douglas. Pending my urgent representation to the Mexican government I cannot therefore order the troops at Douglas to cross the border, but I must ask you and the local authorities in case the same danger recurs to direct the people of Douglas to place themselves where bullets cannot reach them and thus avoid casualty. I am loath to endanger Americans in Mexico, where they are necessarily exposed, by taking a radical step to prevent injury to Americans on our side of the border who can avoid it by a temporary inconvenience."

I am glad to say that no further invasion of American rights of any substantial character occurred.

The prospects of a peace, military

and naval force available for prompt

action near the Mexican border proved to be most fortunate under the somewhat trying conditions presented by this invasion of American rights. . . . On May 25, 1911, President Diaz resigned, Señor de la Barra was chosen provisional president. Elections for president and vice president were thereafter held throughout the republic, and Señor Francisco I. Madero was formally declared elected on Oct. 15 to the chief magistracy. On Nov. 6 President Madero entered upon the duties of his office.

Since the inauguration of President Madero a plot has been unearthed against the present government to begin a new insurrection. Pursuing the same consistent policy which this administration has adopted from the beginning, it directed an investigation into the conspiracy charged, and this investigation has resulted in the indictment of General Bernardo Reyes and others and the seizure of a number of officers and men and horses and accoutrements assembled upon the soil of Texas for the purpose of invading Mexico. Similar proceedings had been taken during the insurrection against the Diaz government, resulting in the indictments and prosecution of persons found to be engaged in violating the neutrality laws of the United States in aid of that uprising.

The record of this government in respect of the recognition of constituted authority in Mexico therefore is clear.

Central America—Honduras and Nicaragua Treaties Proposed.

As to the situation in Central America, I have taken occasion in the past to emphasize most strongly the importance that should be attributed to the consummation of the conventions between the republics of Nicaragua and of Honduras and this country, and I again earnestly recommend that the necessary advice and consent of the senate be accorded to these treaties, which will make it possible for these Central American republics to enter upon an era of genuine economic national development. . . .

Panama.

Our relations with the republic of Panama, peculiarly important, due to mutual obligations and the vast interests created by the canal, have continued in the usual friendly manner, and we have been glad to make appropriate expression of our attitude of sympathetic interest in the endeavors of our neighbor in undertaking the development of the rich resources of the country. With reference to the internal political affairs of the republic, our obvious concern is in the maintenance of public peace and constitutional order and the fostering of the general interests created by the actual relations of the two countries without the manifestation of any preference for the success of either of the political parties.

THE FAR EAST.

The Chinese Loans.

The past year has been marked in our relations with China by the conclusion of two important international loans, one for the construction of the carrying out of the railway referred to in the previous report, and the other for the construction of the railway with the United States, Great Britain and Japan, of which mention was made in my last annual message.

It will be remembered that early in 1909 an agreement was consummated among British, French and German financial groups whereby they proposed to lend the Chinese government funds for the construction of railways in the provinces of Hunan and Hupoh, reserving for their nationals the privilege of engineering the construction of the lines and of furnishing the materials required for the work. After negotiations with the governments and groups concerned an agreement was reached whereby American, British, French and German nationals should participate upon equal terms in this important and useful undertaking. Thereupon the financial groups, supported by their respective governments, began negotiations with the Chinese government which terminated in a loan to China of \$30,000,000, with the privilege of increasing the amount to \$50,000,000. The co-operative construction of these trunk lines should be of immense advantage to the Chinese people, and to China and should greatly facilitate the development of the bountiful resources of the empire. On the other hand, a large portion of these funds is to be expended for materials, American products having equal preference with those of the other three leading nations, and as the contract provides for branches and extensions subsequently to be built on the same terms the opportunities for American materials will reach considerable proportions.

Knowing the interest of the United States in the reform of Chinese currency, the Chinese government, in the autumn of 1910, sought the assistance of the American government to procure funds with which to accomplish that important reform. In the course of the subsequent negotiations there was combined with the proposed currency loan one for certain industrial developments in Manchuria, the two loans aggregating the sum of \$50,000,000. While this was originally to be solely an American enterprise, the American government, consistently with its desire to secure a sympathetic and practical co-operation of the great powers toward maintaining the principle of equality of opportunity and the administrative integrity of China, urged the Chinese government to admit to participation in the currency loan the associates of the American group in the Hukang loan.

Europe and the Near East.

In Europe and the near east during the past twelve months there has been a marked and considerable political unrest. The Moroccan question, which for some months was the cause of great anxiety, happily appears to have reached a stage at which it need no longer be regarded with concern. The Ottoman empire was occupied for a period by strife in Albania and is now at war with Italy. In Greece and the Balkan countries the quieting potentialities of this situation have been more or less felt. Persia has been the scene of a long internal struggle. These conditions have been the cause of uneasiness in European diplomacy, but thus far without direct political concern to the United States.

In the war which unhappily exists between Italy and Turkey this government has no direct political interest, and I took occasion at the suitable time to issue a proclamation of neutrality in that conflict. At the same time all necessary steps have been taken to safeguard the personal interests of American citizens and organizations in so far as affected by the war.

Coronation of King George V.

The 22d of June of the present year marked the coronation of his Britannic majesty King George V. In honor of this auspicious occasion I sent a special embassy to London. The courteous and cordial welcome extended to this government's representatives by his majesty and the people of Great Britain has further emphasized the strong bonds of friendship happily existing between the two nations.

When these negotiations were begun it was understood that a financial adviser was to be employed by China in connection with the reform, and in order that absolute equality in all respects among the lending nations might be scrupulously observed the American government proposed the nomination of a neutral adviser, which was agreed to by China and the other governments concerned. On Sept. 28, 1911, Dr. Vissering, president of the Dutch Java bank and a financier of wide experience in the orient, was recommended to the Chinese government for the post of monetary adviser.

Especially important at the present, when the ancient Chinese empire is shaken by civil war incidental to its weakening to the many inducements and activities of modernization, are the co-operative policy of good understanding which has been fostered by the international projects referred to above and the general sympathy of view among all the powers interested in the far east. While safeguarding the interests of our nationals, this government is using its best efforts in continuance of its traditional policy of sympathy and friendship toward the Chinese empire and its people, with the hope that the economic and administrative development and with the constant disposition to contribute to their welfare in all proper ways consistent with an attitude of strict impartiality as between contending factions.

For the first time in the history of the two countries a Chinese cruiser, the Hschi, under the command of Admiral Ching, recently visited New York, where the officers and men were given a cordial welcome.

New Japanese Treaty.

The treaty of commerce and navigation between the United States and Japan, signed in 1894, would, by a strict interpretation of its provisions, have terminated on July 17, 1913. Japan's general treaty with the other powers, however, terminated in 1911, and the Japanese government expressed an earnest desire to conduct the negotiations for a new treaty with the United States simultaneously with its negotiations with the other powers. There were a number of important questions involved in the treaty, including the immigration of laborers, revision of the customs tariff and the right of Americans to hold real estate in Japan. The United States consented to waive all technicalities and to enter at once upon negotiations for a new treaty on the understanding that there should be a continuance throughout the life of the treaty of the same effective measures for the restriction of immigration of laborers to American territory, which had been in operation since 1908. The Japanese government accepted this basis of negotiation, and a new treaty was quickly concluded, resulting in a highly satisfactory settlement of the other questions referred to.

A satisfactory adjustment has also been effected of the question growing out of the annexation of Korea by Japan.

The recent visit of Admiral Count Togo to the United States as the nation's guest afforded a welcome opportunity to demonstrate the friendly feeling so happily existing between the two countries.

THE TREATY OF 1832.

By direction of the state department our ambassador to Russia has recently been having a series of conferences with the minister of foreign affairs of Russia with a view to securing a clearer understanding and construction of the treaty of 1832 between Russia and the United States, and the modification of an existing Russian regulation which may be found to interfere in any way with the rights of American citizens under this treaty. I believe that the government of Russia is addressing itself seriously to the need of changing the practice under that treaty of that sufficient progress has been made to warrant the confidence of these conferences in the hope that there may soon be removed any justification of the complaints of treaty violation now prevalent in this country.

I expect that immediately after the Christmas recess I shall be able to make a further communication to congress on this subject.

Siam.

There has been a change of sovereigns in Siam, and the American minister at Bangkok was accredited in a special capacity to represent the United States at the coronation ceremony of the new king.

Europe and the Near East.

In Europe and the near east during the past twelve months there has been a marked and considerable political unrest. The Moroccan question, which for some months was the cause of great anxiety, happily appears to have reached a stage at which it need no longer be regarded with concern. The Ottoman empire was occupied for a period by strife in Albania and is now at war with Italy. In Greece and the Balkan countries the quieting potentialities of this situation have been more or less felt. Persia has been the scene of a long internal struggle. These conditions have been the cause of uneasiness in European diplomacy, but thus far without direct political concern to the United States.

In the war which unhappily exists between Italy and Turkey this government has no direct political interest, and I took occasion at the suitable time to issue a proclamation of neutrality in that conflict. At the same time all necessary steps have been taken to safeguard the personal interests of American citizens and organizations in so far as affected by the war.

Coronation of King George V.

The 22d of June of the present year marked the coronation of his Britannic majesty King George V. In honor of this auspicious occasion I sent a special embassy to London. The courteous and cordial welcome extended to this government's representatives by his majesty and the people of Great Britain has further emphasized the strong bonds of friendship happily existing between the two nations.

Europe and the Near East.

In Europe and the near east during the past twelve months there has been a marked and considerable political unrest. The Moroccan question, which for some months was the cause of great anxiety, happily appears to have reached a stage at which it need no longer be regarded with concern. The Ottoman empire was occupied for a period by strife in Albania and is now at war with Italy. In Greece and the Balkan countries the quieting potentialities of this situation have been more or less felt. Persia has been the scene of a long internal struggle. These conditions have been the cause of uneasiness in European diplomacy, but thus far without direct political concern to the United States.

Coronation of King George V.

The 22d of June of the present year marked the coronation of his Britannic majesty King George V. In honor of this auspicious occasion I sent a special embassy to London. The courteous and cordial welcome extended to this government's representatives by his majesty and the people of Great Britain has further emphasized the strong bonds of friendship happily existing between the two nations.

As the result of a determined effort on the part of both Great Britain and the United States to settle all of their outstanding differences a number of treaties have been entered into between the two countries in recent years by which nearly all of the unsettled questions between them of any importance have either been adjusted by agreement or arrangements made for their settlement by arbitration. A number of the unsettled questions referred to consist of pecuniary claims presented by each country against the other, and in order that as many of these claims as possible should be settled by arbitration a special agreement for that purpose was entered into between the two governments on the 18th day of August, 1910, in accordance with article 2 of the general arbitration treaty with Great Britain of April 4, 1908. Pursuant to the provisions of this special agreement a schedule of claims has already been agreed upon, and the special agreement, together with this schedule, received the approval of the senate when submitted to it for that purpose at the last session of congress. Negotiations between the two governments for the preparation of an additional schedule of claims are already well advanced, and it is my intention to submit such schedule as soon as it is agreed upon to the senate for its approval in order that the arbitration proceedings may be undertaken at an early date. In this connection the attention of congress is particularly called to the necessity for an appropriation to cover the expense incurred in submitting these claims to arbitration.

Presentation to Germany of Replica of Von Steuben Statue.

In pursuance of the act of congress, approved June 23, 1910, the secretary of state and the joint committee on the library entered into a contract with the sculptor Albert Jaegers for the execution of a bronze replica of the statue of General von Steuben, erected in Washington, for presentation to his majesty the German emperor and the German nation in recognition of the gift of the statue of Frederick the Great made by the emperor to the people of the United States.

The presentation was made on Sept. 2 last by representatives whom I commissioned as the special mission of this government for the purpose.

The German emperor has conveyed to me by telegram on his own behalf and that of the German people, an expression of appreciative thanks for this action of congress.

Recognition of Portuguese Republic.

The national constituent assembly, regularly elected by the vote of the Portuguese people, having on June 19 last unanimously proclaimed a republic in form of government, the official recognition of the government of the United States was given to the new republic in the afternoon of the same day.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND CONFERENCES.

International Prize Court.

The supplementary protocol to The Hague convention for the establishment of an international prize court, mentioned in my last annual message, embodying stipulations providing for an alternative procedure which would remove the constitutional objection to that part of The Hague convention which provides that there may be an appeal to the proposed court from the decisions of national courts, has received the signature of the governments parties to the original convention and has been ratified by the government of the United States, together with the prize court convention.

The deposit of the ratifications with the government of the Netherlands awaits action by the powers to the declaration, signed at London on Feb. 26, 1909, of the rules of international law to be recognized within the meaning of article 7 of The Hague convention for the establishment of an international prize court.

Fur Seal Treaty.

The fur seal controversy . . . has at last been satisfactorily adjusted by the conclusion of the north Pacific sealing convention entered into between the United States, Great Britain, Japan and Russia on the 7th of July last.

International Opium Commission.

In a special message transmitted to the congress on the 7th of January, 1911, in which I concurred in the recommendations made by the secretary of state in regard to certain needful legislation for the control of our interstate and foreign traffic in opium and other menacing drugs. . . . I recommended that the manufacture, sale and use of opium in the United States should be more rigorously controlled by legislation.

Prior to that time and in continuance of the policy of this government to secure the co-operation of the interested nations the United States proposed an international opium conference with full powers for the purpose of clothing with the force of international law the resolutions adopted by the above mentioned commission, together with their essential corollaries. The other powers concerned cordially responded to the proposal of this government, and, I am glad to be able to announce, representatives of all the powers assembled in conference at The Hague on the 1st of this month. . . . It seems to me most essential that the congress should take immediate action on the anti-narcotic legislation to which I have already called attention by a special message.

Buenos Aires Conventions.

The four important conventions signed at the fourth pan-American conference at Buenos Aires, providing for the regulation of trademarks, patents and copyrights and for the arbitration of pecuniary claims, have, with the adhesion and consent of the senate, been ratified on the part of the United States, and the ratifications have been deposited with the government of the Argentine Republic in accordance with the requirements of the conventions. I am not advised that similar action has been taken by any other of the signatory governments.

In my last annual message I referred to the tariff negotiations of the department of state with foreign countries in connection with the application, by a series of proclamations, of the minimum tariff of the United States to importations from the several countries, and I stated that in its general operation section 2 of the new tariff law had proved a guaranty of continued commercial peace, although there were, unfortunately, instances where foreign governments dealt arbitrarily with American interests within their jurisdiction in a manner injurious and inequitable. During the past year some instances of discriminatory treatment have been removed, but I regret to say that there remain a few cases of differential treatment adverse to the commerce of the United States. While none of these instances now appears to amount to undue discrimination in the sense of section 2 of the tariff law of Aug. 5, 1909, they are all exceptions to that complete degree of equality of tariff treatment that the department of state has consistently sought to obtain for American commerce abroad.

While the double tariff feature of the tariff law of 1909 has been simply justified by the banks already in removing former and preventing new undue discriminations against American commerce, it is believed that the time has come for the amendment of this feature of the law in such way as to provide a graduated means of meeting varying degrees of discriminatory treatment of American commerce in foreign countries as well as to protect the financial interests abroad of American citizens against arbitrary and injurious treatment on the part of foreign governments through either legislative or administrative measures.

It would also seem desirable that the maximum tariff of the United States should embrace within its purview the free list, which is not the case at the present time, in order that it might have reasonable significance to the governments of those countries from which the importations into the United States are confined virtually to articles on the free list.

Record of Highest Amount of Foreign Trade.

The fiscal year ended June 30, 1911, shows great progress in the development of American trade. It was noteworthy as marking the highest record of exports of American products to foreign countries, the valuation being in excess of \$2,000,000,000. These exports showed a gain over the preceding year of more than \$300,000,000.

Crying Need For American Merchant Marine.

I need hardly reiterate the conviction that there should speedily be built up an American merchant marine. This is necessary to assure favorable transportation facilities to our great oceanic commerce as well as to supplement the navy with an adequate reserve of ships and men. It would have the economic advantage of keeping at home part of the vast sums now paid foreign shipping for carrying American goods. All the great commercial nations pay heavy subsidies to their merchant marine, so that it is obvious that without some wise aid from the congress the United States must lag behind in the matter of merchant marine in its present anomalous position.

Extension of American Banking to Foreign Countries.

Legislation to facilitate the extension of American banks to foreign countries is another matter in which our foreign trade needs assistance. Improvement of the Foreign Service.

The entire foreign service organization is being improved and developed with especial regard to the requirements of the commercial interests of the country. The rapid growth of our foreign trade makes it of the utmost importance that governmental agencies through which that trade is to be aided and protected should possess a high degree of efficiency. Not only should the foreign representatives be maintained upon a generous scale in so far as salaries and establishments are concerned, but the selection and advancement of officers should be definitely and permanently regulated by law so that the service shall not fail to attract men of high character and ability. . . . It is my earnest conviction that the enactment into law of the general principles of the existing regulations cannot fail to effect further improvement in both branches of the foreign service by providing greater inducement for young men of character and ability to seek a career abroad in the service of the government and an incentive to those already in the service to put forth greater efforts to attain the high standards of the absolute nonpartisan conduct of our international relations and commerce requires.

I therefore again commend to the favorable action of the congress the enactment of a law applying to the diplomatic and consular service the principles embodied in section 1758 of the revised statutes of the United States in the civil service act of Jan. 16, 1883, and the executive order of June 27, 1906, and Nov. 23, 1909. In its consideration of this important subject I desire to recall to the attention of the congress the very favorable report made on the Lowden bill for the improvement of the foreign service by the foreign affairs committee of the house of representatives. Available statistics show the strictness with which the merit system has been applied to the foreign service during recent years and the absolute nonpartisan selection of consuls and diplomatic service secretaries, who, indeed, far from being selected with any view to political consideration, have actually been chosen to a disproportionate extent from states which would have been unrepresented in the foreign service under the system which it is to be hoped is now permanently obsolete.

Some legislation for the perpetuation of the present system of examinations and promotions upon merit and efficiency would be of greatest value to our commercial and international interests.

WM. H. TAFT.

The White House, Dec. 7, 1911.

YIELDED TO EDMUNDS.

Cleveland's Political Fate Won After His Friends Had Failed.

Soon after Mr. Cleveland entered the White House in 1885 Vice President Hendricks died at his home in Indianapolis, and the president made arrangements to attend the funeral. Many of his social intimates and all his official advisers united in an effort to dissuade him from making this twenty-hour journey, enlarging on the manifold risks of rail travel at all times and the special opportunity this would offer some fanatic to assassinate him. But he remained immovable until within a few hours of the time set for closing up his business he received an unexpected call from Senator Edmunds of Vermont.

Mr. Edmunds was the leader of the Republican side of the senate and was understood to have in preparation several measures of opposition to the announced policies of the new administration. But he was also and above all else an American citizen and a patriot, and his visit to his political foe was made in that character. In a conversation of less than half an hour, in which he drew the curtain over all differences and disregarded all empty formalities of intercourse, he laid before the president in the clear terms and logical order in which he knew so well how to express himself the larger aspects of the situation.

As the presidential succession law then stood the speaker of the house of representatives stood next in line to the vice president, and next to him came the president pro tempore of the senate. The house not having organized since the inauguration, no speaker had been elected, and the senate having failed at its special session to choose a president pro tempore to serve during the recess, only one life—that of the president himself—stood between the nation and administrative anarchy; hence, argued Mr. Edmunds, it was Mr. Cleveland's duty to forego every other consideration and invite no chances of throwing upon the country they both loved a strain such as it had never been subjected to before.

The writer of these lines was seated in the next room while this visit was in progress, and he will never forget the president's expression of satisfaction on coming out of his office after the senator had gone. He gave orders at once that all preparations for his journey should be suspended and declared that nothing that had occurred since he entered the White House had so touched him as the kind solicitude shown by Mr. Edmunds about his exposing himself to any peril now. The others who had reasoned with him on the subject were men who were presumptively friendly and whose chief anxiety seemed to be lest he should suffer some injury to his individual person or fortunes. But here was a man who, as far as politics was concerned, was a hostile of hostiles, yet who appealed to him in behalf of the American people and their government.

"That settled it," Mr. Cleveland concluded as he turned to go back to his office. "After what Edmunds said there can be no further question of where my highest obligation lies."

F. E. L. in New York Post.

Soft Toned Bells of China.

The natives of China use large bells of their own make in many of their temples and monasteries. I have noticed all through Japan and China that the tone of the monastery and temple bells is very soft and smooth, due to the superior quality of the material used in their manufacture and to the absence of iron clappers, the result being a marvelous softness and mellowness of tone. The bells are never swung, being always suspended in a fixed frame, and the sound is produced by striking them on the outer edge with a wooden mallet. This makes the soft tones which are so delightfully melodious.—Consular Reports.

Dr. Holmes' Wit.

One of the best partisans ever credited to a habitual maker of happy phrases was that made by the beloved "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" on a certain social occasion.

Going to dine with a Boston neighbor, Dr. Holmes was met by her with an apology:

"I could not get another man. We are four women, and you will have to take us all in."

"Forewarned is farsighted," he said with a bow.

Fishes and Fiths.

The fly is born in, lives and thrives upon filth. If no filth is allowed to accumulate in a house or its neighborhood it will not be troubled by flies, for they do not ordinarily stray far from their breeding places and their source of food. In a thoroughly clean neighborhood they cannot live in the face of screens preventing their access to food and to the absence of manure and other receptacles for filth in which to deposit their eggs.—Survey.

Helping Things Along.

"The family in the next flat has three phonographs and four boys with toy express wagons," said Mr. Grover's wife. "What on earth shall we do?"

"Send for the piano tuner and ask him how much he'll take to work by the day."—Washington Star.

Good News.